



STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

P.O. BOX 83720
BOISE, IDAHO 83720-0027

TOM LUNA
STATE SUPERINTENDENT
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Idaho State Department of Education
February 14, 2014
www.sde.idaho.gov

Media contact:
Melissa McGrath
(208) 332-6818
mmcgrath@sde.idaho.gov

DEPARTMENT PUBLISHES SCHOOL SAFETY, SECURITY ASSESSMENT

BOISE – As part of Idaho’s effort to improve school safety and security, the Idaho State Department of Education has published the results of a comprehensive school safety assessment, administered among a representative sample 74 schools last year.

“While this report identifies several challenges in the area of school safety, it also recognizes many successes in Idaho’s schools that we can build upon going forward,” Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna said. “Based on this assessment, we now have baseline information that we as a state will use to support schools as they improve safety and security for every child. This is essential because we know no child will be free to learn until they are truly free from intimidation and fear.”

In December 2012, as a result of the tragic school shooting in Newtown, Connecticut, Superintendent Luna called on the state to take a renewed look at school safety and security. He established the Safe and Secure Schools Task Force, made up of educators and first responders as well as a liaison with the Governor’s office. Among its recommendations, the Task Force decided to conduct a comprehensive assessment to collect an objective, statewide snapshot of how prepared schools are to prevent and respond to crisis situations and to build local capacity to implement school safety improvements.

This comprehensive assessment provides important data to guide the state’s work going forward. Here are a few highlights from the report:

- In 68 of the 74 schools, they have published and/or promote statements regarding anti-bullying, anti-harassment, or anti-violence.
- In 68 of the 74 schools, they have alternatives to suspension and/or expulsion, which are effective disciplinary measures that continue to engage students rather than excluding them from the school setting entirely.
- In 60 of the 74 schools, they have a policy to lock classroom doors at the end of the day.
- In 71 of 74 schools, unauthorized entrance to the school was achieved through some way other than the designated main entrance.

Specifically, these results will inform future professional development opportunities, technical assistance, guidance and resources for Idaho schools. For fiscal year 2015, Superintendent Luna has requested \$2.2 million in funding that will flow directly to Idaho’s schools and districts as well as an additional \$500,000 to be used at the state level to provide guidance and technical assistance.

To read the full results of the comprehensive assessment, please visit http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/safe_secure/.

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